rein in interest rates on home loan at current rates, provided banks are in a position to address the rebalancing of their credit portfolio.

Review of subsidy burden in budget

1549. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have attempted a rational review of the subsidy burden in the current budget in the context of the findings of the YK Alagh Committee on fertilizer prices and Rangaranjan Committee on petroleum products;

(b) what is the quantum of release on fertilizer subsidy this fiscal above the originally budgeted Rs. 17,250.00 crore; and

(c) what are the steps being taken to tackle the subsidy burden on food and power sectors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Yes, Sir. Based on the recommendations of the report of the Working Group under the Chairmanship of Dr. Y.K. Alagh, Government has approved the pricing policy for urea units for Stage III of New Pricing Scheme (NPS) with effect from October 1,2006 to March 31, 2010.

Based on the recommendation of the Rangarajan Committee Report, pricing of petrol and diesel has been changed to trade parity basis. Customs duties on petrol and diesel were earlier reduced to 7.5 per cent from 10 percent. In the Union Budget 2007-08, the *ad valorem* component of excise duty on petrol and diesel has been reduced from 8 per cent to 6 per cent.

(b) According to Revised Estimates, fertilizer subsidy is placed at Rs. 22,452 crore in 2006-07.

(c) Providing minimum consumption entitlements to the poor by subsidizing the essential items consumed by them is an extremely important welfare dimension. Subsidies can correct the underconsumption of goods with positive externalities. The Gvoernment is committed to fulfilling its welfare obligation. In the power sector, the Accelerated Power

Development and Reforms Project (APDRP) is restructured to cover all district headquarters and towns with a population of more then 50,000. The budgetary support for APDRP is proposed to be enhanced from Rs. 650 crore in 2006-07 to Rs: 800 crore in 2007-08.

Screening of funds flow from Flls

1550. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether officials of sensitive Government Departments have been emphasizing on screening of funds-flow from Flls to the Indian Capital Market;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) the action specifically taken, if any, in response thereto indicating the norms formulated for screening of funds;

(d) the details of funds detected, if any, in the last three years for their suspicious/ghost origin;

(e) whether Government have been concerned about tapping of Indian stock market by anti-India jehadi outfits, in particular, as disclosed recently by the national Security Advisor in his deliberations at Munich; and

(f) if so, what is Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (f) Information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of House.

Dearness allowance to employees

1551. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under active consideration of Government to give the dearness allowance to the employees at the annual increase time to save the burden of enhancement of the prices of essential commodities;